AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-4.   (canceled).

5.   (currently amended): An ordering method comprising:

transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a communication network, wherein the sales information includes product listings for a plurality of items which are sold only at sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network;

displaying, at said user terminal, the transmitted sales information which is received from the agent server, wherein the user terminal transmits a first search request signal to said server to request a service charge associated with performing a search by an agent at specified sales shops, which are selected by the user, among the sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network for a desired item if the desired item is not included among the plurality of items included in the product listings and the service charge associated with performing the search is requested by the user;

determining, at said agent server, said service charge based on contents of the first search

request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the service charge that is determined to said

user terminal;

displaying, at the user terminal, the service charge that is transmitted from the agent

server, wherein the user terminal transmits a second search request signal to said server if search

for the desired item is instructed by the user;

transmitting, from the agent server, a search report <u>which includes results of the search</u>

<u>for the desired item performed by the agent at the specified sales shops that are not accessible via</u>

<u>said communications network</u> ~~of said desired item~~ to said user terminal;

displaying, at the user terminal, the transmitted search report, wherein the user terminal

transmits a purchase order of the desired item to be purchased by the agent if <u>the search report</u>

<u>indicates that the desired item is available for purchase from at least one of the specified sales</u>

<u>shops that are not accessible via said communications network and</u> purchase of the desired item

is instructed by the user; and

transmitting, from the agent server, an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in

response to said purchase order which is received from the user terminal, wherein the

acknowledgement message indicates that the purchase order has been accepted.

6.   (previously presented): The ordering method of claim 5, said communications

network is the Internet.

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      7.   (previously presented): The ordering method of claim 5, wherein said search

report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the desired item.

      8.   (currently amended): An ordering method comprising the steps of:

      a)   transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a

communications network, wherein the sales information includes product listings of a plurality

of items which are sold only at sales shops that are not accessible via said communications

network;

      b)   displaying, at said user terminal, the transmitted sales information which is

received from the agent server to allow a user to select one of a plurality of decision branches;

      c)   transmitting, to said agent server, a purchase order if the user selects a first

decision branch, a first request signal for requesting a first service charge required for inspecting

a ~~desired~~ selected item ~~contained~~ included in said displayed information if the user selects a

second decision branch, and a second request signal for requesting a second service charge

required for ~~making~~ performing a search by an agent at specified sales shops, which are selected

by the user, among the sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network for

~~of~~ a desired item which is not ~~contained~~ included in said displayed information if the user selects

a third decision branch;

      d)   determining, at the agent server, said first service charge if said first request signal

is received based on contents of the first request signal and a cost database, determining said

second service charge if said second request signal is received based on contents of the second

request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the first or second service charge that is

determined to said user terminal;

      e)   at displaying, at said user terminal, the first service charge if the first request

signal is received or the second service charge if the second request signal is received, wherein

the user terminal transmits a third request signal to said server if inspection of the selected item

or search of the desired item is instructed by the user;

      f)   at said agent server, transmitting an inspection report of said selected item or a

search report which includes results of the search for the desired item performed by the agent at

the specified sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network of said item to

said user terminal, depending on contents of the third request signal;

      g)   at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted inspection report or search report;

wherein the user terminal transmits a purchase order of the selected item or the desired item to be

purchased by the agent if purchase of the selected item or the desired item is instructed by the

user; and

      h)   at said agent server, transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user

terminal if the purchase order of step (c) or step (g) is received.

      9.   (previously presented): The ordering method of claim 8, wherein said

communications network is the Internet.

10.   (previously presented): The ordering method of claim 8, wherein said inspection report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item and said and said search report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.

11-14. (canceled).

15.   (currently amended): An ordering system comprising:

a communications network;

a plurality of user terminals connected to said network; and

an agent server connected to said network that transmits sales information to a user terminal among said plurality of user terminals, said sales information including product listings of a plurality of items which are sold only at sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network;

wherein the user terminal displays the transmitted sales information which is received from the agent server, wherein the user terminal transmits a first search request signal to said server to request a service charge associated with performing a search by an agent at specified sales shops, which are selected by the user, among the sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network for a desired item if the desired item is not included among the plurality of items in the product listings and the service charge associated with performing the search is requested by the user;

wherein said agent server determines said service charge based on contents of the first search request signal and a cost database, and the agent server transmits the service charge that is determined to said user terminal;

wherein said user terminal displayed the transmitted service charge that is transmitted from the agent server, and the user terminal transmits a second search request signal to said server if search for the desired item is instructed by the user;

wherein said agent server transmits a search report <u>which includes results of the search for the desired item performed by the agent at the specified sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network</u><s>of the desired item</s> to said user terminal;

wherein said user terminal displays the transmitted search report and the user terminal transmits a purchase order of the desired item to be purchased by the agent if <u>the search report indicates that the desired item is available for purchase from at least one of the specified sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network and </u>purchase of the desired item is instructed by the user,

wherein said agent server transmits an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order which is received from the user terminal, said acknowledgement message indicating that the purchase order has been accepted.

16.   (previously presented): The ordering system of claim 15, wherein said communications network is the Internet.

17.   (previously presented): The ordering system of claim 15, wherein said search

report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.

18.   (currently amended): An ordering system comprising:

a communications network;

a plurality of user terminals connected to said network; and

an agent server connected to said network that transmits sales information to a user

terminal among said plurality of user terminals, said sales information including product listings

of a plurality of items which are sold only at shops that are not accessible via said

communications network;

wherein said user terminal displays the transmitted sales information to allow a user to

select one of a plurality of decision branches, the user terminal transmitting to said agent server a

first purchase order if the user selects a first decision branch, a first request signal for requesting

a first service charge required for inspecting a ~~desired~~ selected item ~~contained~~ included in said

displayed information if the user selects a second decision branch, and a second request signal

for requesting a second service charge required for ~~making~~ performing a search by an agent at

specified sales shops, which are selected by the user, among the sales shops that are not

accessible via said communications network for ~~of~~ a desired item which is not ~~contained~~

included in said displayed information if the user selects a third decision branch,

wherein said agent server determines said first service charge if said first request signal is

received based on contents of the first request signal and a cost database, the agent server

determines said second service charge if said second request signal is received based on contents

of the second request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the first or second service

charge that is determined to said user terminal;

wherein said user terminal displays the first service charge if the first request signal is

received or the second service charge if the second request signal is received, said user terminal

transmitting a third request signal to said server if inspection of the selected item or search of the

desired item is instructed by the user;

wherein said agent server transmits an inspection report of said selected item or a search

report which includes results of the search for the desired item performed by the agent at the

specified sales shops that are not accessible via said communications network of said item to said

user terminal, depending on contents of the third request signal,

wherein said user terminal displays the transmitted inspection report or search report, said

user terminal transmitting a purchase order of the selected item or the desired item to be

purchased by the agent if purchase of the selected item or the desired item is instructed by the

user, and

wherein said agent server transmits an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in

response to each of said first and second purchase orders.

19.   (previously presented): The ordering system of claim 18, wherein said

communications network is the Internet.

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20.   (previously presented): The ordering system of claim 18, wherein said inspection report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item and said and said search report includes a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.